



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY

Entered as second-class matter November 18, 1907, at the Post Office, New York, N. Y., under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879

VOL. IV

NEW YORK, MARCH 25, 1911

No. 21

It is an imperative necessity that the lovers of the Classics shall have reasons for the faith that is in them. However, strong, unwavering faith and ability to formulate justification of such faith do not always go hand in hand. Herein lies one all-important reason why we should constantly remind one another, as well as the outside world, of the importance and value of the Classics. Again, *Quot homines tot sententiae* applies to our situation. What appeals to one reader as a justification for classical study leaves another cold and unimpressed. The time will never come, therefore, when there will cease to be a place for articles intended to strengthen our own faith and to supply us with reasons which we may bring to bear on the world without.

I myself read with unflagging interest pleas for classical studies, to my great profit. Thoughts which have lain half-formulated in my mind find full expression in the words of another; points that had never occurred to me at all constantly meet my eyes; old thoughts are put in new and refreshing ways. In two recent issues of *The Nation* there is matter of interest within our field.

In a letter printed in the issue of March 2, under the caption *Science and the Classics*, Professor H. H. Yeames of Hobart College comments on the paper of Professor Stevenson in a recent number of *Popular Science Monthly* (see *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* 4.97-98). One paragraph seems well worth quoting here:

Translation, we are told, will suffice to give acquaintance with ancient literature, at least; but how much more true this is of modern literature! English versions of French and German classics are far more satisfactory than translations from Greek and Latin, because modern modes of thought and expression, and modern verse-forms, have much in common; whereas no ancient poet has been rendered in a way to satisfy those who know him: the magic remains incommunicable. If one must get great literature through the unsatisfying medium of translation, it is far better that the modern literatures should come to him that way; both because they are essentially less great than the ancient, and because translators can do them greater justice. It may be added that the classicist is more likely to have a fair reading-knowledge of modern languages, a fair acquaintance with modern literatures, than is the modernist to have a first-hand acquaintance with the classics.

In the issue of the *Nation* for March 9 Mr. H. F. Hamilton, of Amherst College, has a letter entitled *Greek in the New York Schools*, brought forth by

the fact that recently the school authorities of New York City, in the interests of economy, ordained that in the Borough of Queens Greek should hereafter be taught in but a single high school, that at Jamaica. I append, without comment, extracts from this letter:

In 1908 I began a systematic attempt to see how far an ignorance of classical mythology might be responsible for the indifference to good reading among the school children of the United States. Taking mixed classes of boys and girls in New York city who were of college age or nearly so, and most of whom were fitting themselves to enter college work, I began to use a series of questions testing each pupil in the amount of information he possessed in those three great literary storehouses of the race, the Scriptures, mythology, and chivalry. The results were discouraging. The objection always brought against Milton was the necessity for using a classical dictionary when reading the *Comus*. After weeks of preparation more than half the classes failed on questions involving mythological names. It is true that the homes represented were often of the peasant or artisan class in Europe, yet the pupils had received their training in American schools and were soon to be counted among the earnest students of American colleges. So it is hard to account for boys of eighteen who had never heard of Venus. Classes were often aghast at being expected to know Apollo without looking him up. Even when Jupiter had been mastered, Jove was described as the queen of love and beauty. . . . In other words, questions in English that should prove child's play to pupils who had read Ovid, Virgil, or the *Iliad*, as well as the Bible, were invariably found to be the severest tests of the memory, and even of the interest, of such young people as now throng our city schools. What a wealth of literary allusion, and of poetic inspiration, must be lost to readers of such limited background.

It has since been possible for me to make a more scientific investigation as to the amount of culture brought by the entering class to a good Eastern college. In 1910, a paper including twelve questions in the Bible and classical mythology was set for the entering class of 150 men in Amherst College. In each series of six, two were the easiest that could be thought of, two were exceedingly difficult, so as to test the intimate as well as the average knowledge of the men. Other general statements were asked for, which were answered with much apparent frankness.

The results were amazing. . . . As many as 27, or 17 per cent., were quite untrained in the classics. 18 were ignorant of Hercules, 59 of Jason; 52, or 34 per cent., were confused about Apollo. On the other hand, it is surprising that 40 men, or 26 per cent. of the 150, could give no information concerning the fall of Troy, although all had studied Latin for three years. Only four men answered all six questions in

mythology. Only three students, or 2 per cent. of the whole class, answered all the questions.

These figures are, of course, merely indications, although a repetition of the examinations (this year) gave virtually the same results.

It would, however, require several such tests, taken during the next four or five years, in many different institutions, to procure a fair basis for estimating the exact effect of substituting, during the last ten years, a little Latin and English for the old-fashioned classical training. If the Dartmouth statistics, published in your issue of February 16, proving that men with Greek training have furnished 54 per cent of the successful scientific students, as opposed to only 20 per cent from the scientific section... be added to the appalling indications from the Amherst examinations, then it would seem impossible that the Board of Education in New York city should attempt to economize by eliminating the Greek departments of the public schools. The abolishing of Greek generally in the public high schools will mean that only the sons of wealthy men who can attend the best private institutions are to enjoy the culture of true classical studies. It will mean that poor men's sons, who have hitherto furnished far more than 50 per cent. of its successful men to the country, must now be entirely excluded from the disciplined efficiency as well as the culture that can come only from the study of the humanities, especially from the study of Greek.

C. K.

CAESAR AND THE CENTRAL PLATEAU OF FRANCE¹

During a ten days' confinement to my bed in the spring of 1898, I re-read Caesar's commentaries, partly to pass the time and partly to find out whether Caesar's campaigns were more intelligible in the light of Professor Davis' lectures on French geography, which I had recently heard. Judge of my delight when I found that the origin and course of the Gallic wars were closely bound up with a very prominent feature in the physical geography of France: namely, the Central Plateau.

Now, this central plateau is a very complex affair, but underlying its complexity of detail is an extremely simple structure, which may be imagined in the following manner:

Suppose France to be a fairly level country and conceive the ground to be suddenly cracked along lines diverging from the mouth of the Isère, on the Rhone, towards Dijon in the north, and Toulouse in the southwest. You will now suppose that the portion of France between these lines is lifted up, as if hinged to Northern France, along a line through Poitiers and Orléans. Along this hinge line there is no uplift, but to the southeast the surface rises steadily until we come to the crack, beyond which the surface lies undisturbed at the old level. The uplifted block has been slightly tilted, but the highest parts are several thousand feet above the

undisturbed portion. This tilted block is the Central Plateau, and the cliffs exposed along the cracks, or *faults*, are the eastern and southern Cevennes.

The relation of this conception to the reality is such that if a combination of geometric surfaces, such as those suggested above, could be superposed on an exact model of France, the true and the ideal surfaces would be everywhere near each other, and their departures from coincidences could, in general, be completely accounted for from considerations of geological structure and history.

Of the complexities, then, I shall say nothing, since, until we are familiar with the general ideal scheme, they merely obscure it. For the rest, they are precisely what the usual maps and encyclopaedia notices emphasize, and the reader may find them for himself.

We shall find the drainage of Southern France in good accordance with our general conception. Close to the summit of the Cevennes cliff, in the south-east, rise the streams that flow on long westward and northward slopes to reach the sea through the Garonne and the Loire, while the waters of the Saône and Rhone flow close under the eastern escarpment and away southward to the Mediterranean.

In B. C. 58 the Roman Province in Gaul lay to the south of the Central Plateau, between the great fan of wash from the Pyrennes on the west and the Maritime Alps on the east. In the open valley, to the east of the escarpment the boundary of the Province lay along the Rhone from near Lyons to Geneva.

In free Gaul the powerful tribes seem to have been the possessors of the rougher country. The Sequani held the Jura mountains, with portions of the Saône valley—the modern departments Jura, Doubs, Haute Saône, with parts of Ain and Saône et Loire. The Aedui held the northeast corner of the central plateau and some lands on the Saône—Saône et Loire, Nièvre and part of Côte d'Or. The Arverni held the western and central portion of the central plateau in the departments Cantal, Puy de Dôme. Allier and part of Haute Loire. These were the three most powerful tribes.

We must remember that this was a period of tribal migrations and the possessors of the high country were in the best position to defend themselves at home and even to hold some of the adjoining lowlands. Thus the Aedui and Sequani were able to control the whole of the Saône valley from the highlands on either side.

In 58 B. C. the Swiss Gauls became discontented with the narrowness of their territory, and sought to migrate from the regions north and east of the Lake of Geneva to the sea coast between the Loire and the Garonne. The natural road is deflected southward by the Cevennes uplift and passes through the lowland to the south of the central plateau, go-

¹ This paper is reprinted by permission from *The Journal of School Geography*, 3.84-89 (March, 1899).